



ClearAction mentors executives for sustainable customer profitability.

www.clearaction.biz
1.877.CEM.ROI.4 toll-free
1.408.687.9700 direct

ClearAction means unique vision and rapid results.

Customer Experience is Decided by You

by Lynn Hunsaker

Everyone wants good things to happen. For both customers and suppliers, we start off our day hoping everything will go well. Across numerous interactions you might feel great, or perhaps sometimes, let down. You probably want to feel great more often! How can that happen? It's up to you as a supplier to create excellent customer experiences that result in enthusiastic positive word-of-mouth and great business results.

It's up to you in all the decisions you make. As Jeanne Bliss explains in her book [I Love You MORE THAN My Dog: 5 Decisions That Drive Extreme Customer Loyalty in Good Times & Bad](#), "Consider the story that the collective decisions of your organization tells customers, employees, and the marketplace. What story is emerging about who you are and what you value? Are your decisions reflecting what you intended? Do they indicate to employees and customers how much you honor them? When you make decisions that respect and honor customers you will earn their respect — eventually their love. Are your decisions compelling customers to tell others to try your products and services? Are customers telling your story?"

'Wow, I never thought of it like that', you may be thinking. And upon reflection, it all makes sense, and is really simple. The key to this kind of decision-making is a frequent examination of your motives: are they really customer-centric? With all our emphasis on customer relationship management, surely we want to carefully hone trust-building. A conscious effort is typically necessary to assure our own customer-focused intended outcomes are not overshadowed by our other needs.



Examine Customer-Centricity of Your Customer Programs

Many customer programs are aimed at getting ideas for new product development, getting new customers, getting help for the sales force to convince prospects, getting excitement about the brand, and getting revenue. With all this 'getting' by companies, how about scrutinizing these customer programs for how much 'giving' they provide to customers?

Make Outside-In Thinking a Habit

Outside-in advocacy seeks to build customer relationships through these primary motives: make it easier and nicer for customers to get solutions. With this focus, the benefits to customers are long-term and self-sustaining. By making it easier and nicer for customers to get and use the solutions we offer, our ambivalent customers are more likely to migrate to brand enthusiasts, positive word-of-mouth accelerates, and both revenue and profit growth are sustainable in an almost auto-pilot mode, relative to inside-out thinking. Outside-in motives prevent waste and generate big results. The usefulness of

any customer relationship building program is exponential when we put aside ethnocentrism for true customer-centrism.

Five Decisions of Highly Successful Customer Experiences

Author Jeanne Bliss has examined dozens of companies that excel in customer experience management. In her book she shares one-page stories of several companies that have best practices for each of these five key decisions that set them apart from their competitors in the eyes of their customers:

- 1) Decide to believe: We trust our customers. We trust those who serve them.
- 2) Decide with clarity of purpose: Our iron-clad integrity and clarity guides the direction of our decisions.
- 3) Decide to be real: We have a spirited soul, humanity in our touch, and a personality that's all ours.
- 4) Decide to be there: We must earn the right to our continued relationship with customers.
- 5) Decide to say sorry: We act with humility when things go wrong. We will make it right.

The companies that make these five decisions a way of life are really loved by their customers. What a great recipe for success in your business!

Actions Speak Louder Than Words

The most valuable thing you can keep in mind is that actions speak louder than words. Customers know you can't judge a book by its cover. It's the actual customer experience that really counts. The essence of great customer experience is consistently delivering your brand promise.

Find out how to customize these tips to your situation; contact the author lynn.hunsaker@clearaction.biz.